(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have identified the potential areas to boost mutual cooperation and bilateral trade; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) During his meeting with visiting Deputy Prime Minister of Russian Federation to India in November, 2004, Commerce and Industry Minister has suggested for setting up of a Joint Study Group (JSG) as a first step for beginning discussions on a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. Details of the same are being worked out. Also to boost bilateral trade with Russia, Government has taken a number of steps which include promotion of dialogue at the highest level, constant review through the Joint Commission/Working Group/Sub-Group mechanism, promoting direct business contacts through exchange of delegations, Joint Business Councils, holding of exhibitions, participation in fairs etc. In addition to this, *w.e.f.* April, 2004, Russia has also been included as a focus country in the ongoing phase of the focus CIS Programme aimed at developing and enhancing India's trade with countries of the CIS Region. Details of the programme are available on Department's website, www.commerce.nic.in under the head 'Trade Promotion Programmes'.

National Insurance Fund for Exporters

†1772. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up National Insurance Fund in order to bring the risks of exporters under insurance cover;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) There is a proposal to set up a National Export Insurance Account (NEIA) under Export Credit

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Guarantee Corporation of India Ltd. (ECGC) to provide insurance cover to medium and long-term high value project exports with Government of India's contribution of Rs. 600 crore during Tenth Five Year Plan.

(c) The proposal is to be placed before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) for approval.

Modernization of leather industry

1773. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the leather industry is proposed to be modernized;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) in what manner this would help to generate additional job opportunities;

(d) whether Government propose to set up exclusive parks for tanneries; and

(e) if so, the locations thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) There is an allocation of Rs. 400 crore for Indian Leather Development Programme (ILDP) during the Tenth Five Year Plan. Out of this, an amount of Rs. 290 crores has been earmarked for the scheme "Integrated Development of Leather Sector (IDLS)" aimed at technology upgradation/modernization of individual units in leather and leather goods industry. The scheme is yet to be approved by the competent authority.

(d) and (e) Under the Indian Leather Development Programme (ILDP), an amount of Rs. 30 crores has been earmarked for infrastructure support to a leather complex. The Government has approved in principle a proposal to support a leather complex in the Nellore District of Andhra Pradesh.